



HEADQUARTERS  
UNITED STATES FORCES-AFGHANISTAN  
KABUL, AFGHANISTAN  
APO AE 09356

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

USFOR-A

24 March 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR Commander, United States Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A), Kabul, Afghanistan, APO AE 09356

SUBJECT: Executive Summary of Findings and Recommendations, Army Regulation (AR) 15-6 Investigation (Allegation that US Service Members Improperly Disposed of Islamic Religious Materials)

1. Background. On the night of 20 February 2012, up to 100 Qur'ans and other religious materials were burned in an incinerator at BAF. The events leading up to the incident involved a search of the library books in the library at the Detention Facility in Parwan (DFIP). Because of suspicions that detainees were using library books to pass notes and messages, members of the 535<sup>th</sup> Military Police (MP) Battalion (BN) and the Theater Intelligence Group (TIG) Counter-Intelligence (CI) Team at the DFIP planned a search of the books in the library. During the search, one of the interpreters helping to interpret the notes and messages written in the books reported that approximately 60-75 percent of the books in the library also contained extremist content. A junior leader perceived that he had permission from his commander to remove the objectionable materials from the library, and the library search team began to separate texts for removal. A work detail loaded the books into a supply truck as part of the nightly burn pit run. During the loading process, an Afghan National Army (ANA) Soldier and an ANA interpreter expressed concern about removing the books to US Service Members loading the books. Because the US Service Members thought that the books were contraband, they disregarded the ANA and interpreter's cautions. The ANA Soldier and interpreter then voiced their concerns to DFIP Operations, but by the time that Battle Captains in DFIP Operations figured out what was happening, the truck was already on its way to the burn pit. Many books were burned before a local national at the burn pit noticed that some of the books were Qur'ans.

2. Overall Findings. In the course of events on 20 February, I find that US Service Members mishandled Qur'ans and other religious material, to include their disposal at an incinerator. I do not find that those involved acted with any malicious intent to disrespect the Qur'an or defame the faith of Islam, however. Ultimately, this tragic incident resulted from a lack of cross-talk between leaders and commands, a lack of senior leader involvement in giving clear guidance in a complex operation, junior and mid-grade leaders choosing the easy way instead of the right way to address a problem, distrust among our US Service Members and our partners, ignorance by US Service Members with respect to the importance and handling of the Qur'an as well as other religious material, and poor adherence by US Service Members to established procedures. Clearly a decisive point in the events that took place that day was the segregation of religious

USFOR-A

SUBJECT: Executive Summary of Findings and Recommendations, Army Regulation (AR) 15-6 Investigation (Allegation that US Service Members Improperly Disposed of Islamic Religious Materials)

books based on the advice of primarily one linguist who characterized the books as “radical” or “extremist” in nature. Over-reliance on one linguist’s interpretation of book content improperly influenced a series of tactical decisions, resulting in a strategic crisis. Nonetheless, US Service Members made the decision to segregate, remove, and burn the books and own the responsibility for their destruction. That US Service Members did not heed the warnings of their ANA partners is, perhaps, my biggest concern. Despite all the missteps, at no time was the path chosen by the involved US Service Members motivated by hatred or intolerance of a particular faith.

3. Summary of Directed Findings Concerning the Facts and Circumstances Surrounding the Improper Disposal of Islamic Religious Materials.

a. Task organization. The Commander, Combined Joint Interagency Task Force (CJIATF) 435 is dual-hatted as the Deputy Commander, Detention Operations, USFOR-A. The Detention Facility in Parwan (DFIP) is under the command of Task Force Protector. Until 20 February 2012, TF Protector was the 43rd Military Police (MP) Brigade. On 20 February 2012, TF Protector transferred from the 43rd MP Brigade to the 42nd MP Brigade. Task Force Protector is comprised of three battalions, one of which is the 535th MP Battalion. The 535th MP Battalion is primarily responsible for the guard force within the DFIP, but it also operates DFIP Operations, a centralized control hub for the entire facility. The transfer of authority may have contributed, but it was not a major factor in the incidents that unfolded. The units directly involved in the incident (535<sup>th</sup> MP BN and TIG CI Team) were not undergoing a transfer of authority.

b. In the months prior to the search of books in the DFIP library, multiple intelligence reports indicated that the library books were used as a medium of communication within the detainee population. More importantly, there was growing suspicion in the 535<sup>th</sup> MP BN and the TIG CI Team that an Afghan local who was hired to administer the library was facilitating this communication both internally and externally to the DFIP. There became a very real concern over an internal threat that jeopardized the lives and safety of the Guard Force and detainees alike. While leaders from the 535<sup>th</sup> MP BN were briefed on the potential security concern and gave approval to the TIG CI Team and the BN S2 (Intelligence) Section to conduct a search of the library, they gave very little specific guidance regarding development of a concept of operations (CONOP), a requirement to back-brief the leadership, or establishment of control for execution.

c. From 18 through 20 February 2012, twelve different US Service Members and three civilian linguists participated in the search of the library at different times. Initially the team’s actions focused on a detailed search of each book, removing all notes from within the books and documenting any messages that were written by detainees in the books. Early in the search, a linguist began identifying books that contained what he termed as extremist content, and he assessed that nearly 60-75 percent of the library content should not be read by detainees. Throughout the first and second day of the search, the focus mostly remained on a detailed intelligence collection with only 40-55 books segregated by the end of the second day for future

USFOR-A

SUBJECT: Executive Summary of Findings and Recommendations, Army Regulation (AR) 15-6 Investigation (Allegation that US Service Members Improperly Disposed of Islamic Religious Materials)

assessment and guidance from the CI Team Chief. During the first two days, the Battalion S2 and CI Team Chief gave the Battalion Commander an update on the library search, including the generalization that the contents of the library contained large amounts of “radical or extremist” texts. The guidance they received from the Battalion Commander was to “get rid of it.” On the afternoon of the search’s third day, the CI Team Chief and one of the linguists began re-examining previously searched books and began segregating those for removal as well. In addition, other search team members began segregating books based on the physical condition and whether other – newer – copies were available. While US Service Members could not distinguish specific books as Qur’ans or religious material because they were written in various languages that the US Service Members could not read, it was common knowledge among the search team members that they were handling religious books among the other texts in the library. By the time the search concluded and the search team began to depart, they had segregated approximately 2,000 books and staged them for removal by placing them on the library floor.

d. Toward the end of the third day of the search, the search team members began to discuss what to do with the large quantity of segregated books, which they deemed to be sensitive contraband because of the intelligence value of the detainee inscriptions within the pages and the “radical” nature of the texts. One of the linguists overheard a US Service Member discuss the possibility of disposing of these materials in the burn pit. Alarmed, the linguist approached his supervisor, who was the officer in charge of the CI team, the CI Team Chief, and warned him against that course of action, at least in part because of the potential reaction of the local nationals working at the burn pit. The CI Team Chief told the S2 non-commissioned officer in charge (NCOIC), who was in charge of the actual removal of the segregated books from the library, that it was a “bad idea” to follow-through on the plan to burn the books, but the CI Team Chief did not explicitly order him not to dispose of the books in the burn pit. Although many members of the search team and the linguist left the library with the impression that the books were going into storage, ultimately no one—including the CI Team Chief—followed up that evening to ensure that was the case.

e. The Battalion S2 Section coordinated for a work detail to help remove the books from the library. The S2 NCOIC previously told some members of the work detail that the books were contraband. None of the work detail members except for one from the Battalion S2 section knew that any of the books were religious books or Qur’ans. That evening, the work detail comprised of another group of US Service Members within the DFIP (two members of the Battalion S4 section and seven members of the Immediate Reaction Force (IRF)) began to load approximately 2,000 books into a light medium tactical vehicle (LMTV) from the unit supply section that normally makes the nightly “burn-pit run” for the DFIP. At the end of the loading process, an ANA officer with an ANA linguist warned US Service Members that there were Qur’ans in the stacks of books. Despite this warning, the work detail completed loading the LMTV as a larger crowd of ANA members began to gather. The Acting Night-Shift IRF Team NCOIC told the LMTV detail to leave as he began to worry about a possible confrontation with the ANA. The

USFOR-A

SUBJECT: Executive Summary of Findings and Recommendations, Army Regulation (AR) 15-6 Investigation (Allegation that US Service Members Improperly Disposed of Islamic Religious Materials)

three US Service Members in the LMTV immediately departed the DFIP and, as instructed, proceeded with the nightly run to the burn pit.

f. Meanwhile at the DFIP, the ANA officer went to DFIP Operations and spoke to Battle Captains on shift there. The ANA officer later stated that a US Service Member told him that the books were going to be stored in a conex, but it is unclear exactly when or who made this statement, however. After this conversation, one of the Battle Captains also spoke to members of the IRF Team, and it then became clear to the Battle Captains in DFIP Operations that a major mistake had been made. One of the Battle Captains on duty ordered two US Service Members from the IRF Team to try to intercept the supply LMTV carrying the books. The IRF Team members initially traveled to the solid waste facility still under construction, which was the wrong location. They had not been to the burn pit location before, so they went to the one closest to the DFIP first. They then drove to the facility on main BAF, but they did not find the LMTV with the books and returned to DFIP Operations.

g. At the burn pit, US Service Members had begun throwing books into an incinerator without soliciting any local national help because they were worried about the intelligence value of the books. A local national who operates the incinerator came to assist. He noticed Qur'ans and other religious books among the books that were being tossed into the incinerator. He called out to a number of other local national employees in the area, and other employees proceeded to shut off the incinerator and douse the flames in the incinerator with water using a front-end loader. They rescued several burned copies of religious books, including Qur'ans. The three US Service Members on the burn pit detail became frightened by the growing, angry crowd and rapidly departed the area in the LMTV. They returned to the warehouse and began downloading the remaining books, reporting what happened to DFIP Operations and were instructed to secure the remaining books in the warehouse.

h. MPs responded to a growing disturbance at the solid waste management facility on main BAF. When they learned what had happened, they checked the burn-pit vehicle log and dispatched a patrol to the DFIP. There they found the books already downloaded from the LMTV and secured them with a guard force.

#### 4. Summary of Directed Findings Concerning a Determination of Any Fault, Negligence, or Responsibility on the Part of Anyone Related to the Circumstances under Investigation.

a. I find that the [REDACTED] (b)(3), (b)(5), (b)(6), (b)(7)c to ensure sufficient coordination was conducted with the [REDACTED] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c of the 535<sup>th</sup> MP BN and TF Protector. TF Protector has a staff element dedicated to intelligence collection regarding insider threats (the counterintelligence (COIN) team). The [REDACTED] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c should have ensured that the employment of the CI Team was fully integrated into the supported unit (535<sup>th</sup> MP BN) operations and that an actual CONOP was developed in some detail. Additionally, the collection effort itself did not appear to use sound technical procedures. For instance, many members of the search team, especially on the third day, seemed unclear about what the search criteria

USFOR-A

SUBJECT: Executive Summary of Findings and Recommendations, Army Regulation (AR) 15-6 Investigation (Allegation that US Service Members Improperly Disposed of Islamic Religious Materials)

actually were; the deliberate search procedures exercised on the first and second days seemed to fall by the wayside as the (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c and a linguist went back through already-searched-through books on the third day; and evidence was ultimately destroyed instead of being kept for further exploitation value. The (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c also relied heavily on one linguist's characterization of books as extremist to quickly change the search criteria.

b. Leaders within the 535<sup>th</sup> MI BN were also derelict in their duties in providing the necessary leadership and oversight during planning, preparation and execution of the CI search of the library. Evidence suggests that key leaders within the Battalion Command Group had some awareness of the plans to execute a search in the library but did not exercise sufficient oversight. These key leaders include the (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c None of the search results, the change in search criteria, nor the decision to burn the materials was ever formally briefed to leadership during any operations battle rhythm event such as a concept of operations (CONOP) brief, battle update brief (BUB) or a shift change brief. While the (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c was not aware of the specific plan to burn the books, he was aware of the search plan. He said he had no idea that there were Qur'ans in the library. The (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c also stated that he did not ask for more specifics because he assumed that this was a brigade operation.

c. The (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c in the absence of any further guidance, decided that the best way to get rid of the large number of books that they considered contraband was to send them to the burn pit. No one ordered them to do this; the (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c interpreted the (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c comment, "get rid of it," as permission to burn the books. The (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c also mentioned the plan to the (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c did not inquire any further, and the (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c seemed to have construed silence on the matter as consent to proceed with his loose interpretation of what the standard operating procedures (SOPs) permitted. The two-page guide that the (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c referred to for guidance regarding "contraband," however, required the S2 to log the evidence on a DA Form 4137 for accountability purposes and to maintain the evidence for 30 days. I find that the (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c was derelict in seeking additional specific guidance from battalion leadership when confronted with the change in the situation regarding the library search. When the search plan changed from searching books for intelligence value to searching for books with extremist value and getting rid of them, the (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c should have known to seek additional guidance. The incoming COIN Team (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c who was part of the advance party for the 42<sup>nd</sup> MP BDE) also suggested that the (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c coordinate with the Brigade G2 Section, and he did not do so.

d. Despite the fact that the DFIP SOP specifically covers the special handling requirements concerning the Qur'an, and that the (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c knew that there was a reasonable probability that Qur'ans and religious books were among the books in the library that they considered contraband, they decided to burn the books. Their own S2 contraband SOP required them to log in the evidence (and, arguably, to also store it for 30 days), and the CI Team members searching the library books also predominantly believed that the materials would be further exploited (implying they would be stored), but the (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c made

USFOR-A

SUBJECT: Executive Summary of Findings and Recommendations, Army Regulation (AR) 15-6 Investigation (Allegation that US Service Members Improperly Disposed of Islamic Religious Materials)

the decision to burn the books anyways. Towards the end of the search on the third day, one of the linguists overheard about the plan to burn the books and informed the [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c that was a bad idea. The [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c passed on the message to the [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c but instead of ordering him not to burn the books, he merely told him that it was not a good idea, or words to that effect. The [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c all had the knowledge that the library contained Qur'ans and other religious books, and they knew or should have known that many of those type books were among those segregated for removal on the library floor. They all also knew the initial plan for the books was disposal in the burn pit, but only the [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c received a specific warning that the plan to burn the books was a bad idea. I find the [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c the most culpable because he decided to proceed with and direct the plan to burn them anyways.

e. Most of the members of the detail moving the books (two members of the Battalion S4 (supply) section and seven members of the IRF Team) had no reason to believe that the books they were detailed to move from the library to the supply truck were Qur'ans or other religious books until an ANA officer and a linguist approached the truck. Some of the detail members had been told previously that the books were contraband and needed to go to the burn pit. The Acting IRF Team Night-Shift NCOIC stated that he only knew that the IRF Team was tasked to move books considered contraband from the library into a supply truck and did not know they were going to the burn pit at the time. He said that it never occurred to him that the books might be Qur'ans because US Service Members were not even supposed to touch the books. When the ANA officer and linguist told him that there were Qur'ans and other religious books among those being loaded on the truck, the [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c did not stop to seek clarification from the DFIP Operations section; instead, he told the truck operator to leave in order to avoid what he deemed to be a potential confrontation between the ANA and the occupants of the truck. His actions illustrate distrust between the ANA and US Service Members, and he should have sought clarification and additional guidance from DFIP Operations before sending the truck on.

f. The interpreter who primarily advised the CI Team and S2 Section that 60-75 percent of the library's contents were radical or extremist was also culpable to some degree for the incident. As a Category II linguist, one of his duties, besides interpretation, was to also act as a cultural advisor to the US Service Members. I find that he did not fully perform his duties to warn the US Service Members about the appropriate handling of the books and to ensure that the final disposition of the books was appropriate. I also find that his explanation of the characterization of some of the Qur'ans as being extremist lead the [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c in particular, to believe that certain interpretations of the Qur'an were not actually Qur'ans. This directly led to Qur'ans being characterized as contraband and, subsequently, not handled appropriately. The [redacted] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c explained that the interpreter's explanation was that "Muslims do not consider the radical Islamic books 'Korans' since they were rewritten." The interpreter explained that the books he was describing as extremist were such extreme rewrites that other Muslims would not even consider them to be Qur'ans.

USFOR-A

SUBJECT: Executive Summary of Findings and Recommendations, Army Regulation (AR) 15-6 Investigation (Allegation that US Service Members Improperly Disposed of Islamic Religious Materials)

g. Based on all of the above, I find that the following personnel were at fault and responsible in varying degrees for the incident. [REDACTED] (b)(5)

[REDACTED] (b)(5)

(a) [REDACTED]

(b)(3), (b)(5), (b)(6), (b)(7)c

[REDACTED] (b)(3), (b)(5), (b)(6), (b)(7)c

USFOR-A

SUBJECT: Executive Summary of Findings and Recommendations, Army Regulation (AR) 15-6 Investigation (Allegation that US Service Members Improperly Disposed of Islamic Religious Materials)

(b)(3), (b)(5), (b)(6), (b)(7)c

## 5. Summary of Findings Regarding the Materials Taken to the Burn Pit.

- a. Approximately 2,000 DFIP library books characterized as worn, written-in, and extremist were taken to the burn pit. Based on statements from the three individuals in the LMTV that transported the books to the burn pit, less than 100 books were burned before the Soldiers were confronted by local nationals who realized the books were Qur'ans.
- b. Sometime after 2230 on 20 February 2012, military police (MPs) were called to the disturbance at the burn pit. An MP patrol found the LMTV that transported the library books at a warehouse where the three Soldiers were downloading the remaining books. The MPs secured the books at the warehouse. At approximately 0430, the books and their tri-wall containers were re-secured in a Conex to protect them from the weather, the Conex was locked, and it was secured by a US and ANA guard. A later joint inventory of the remaining books on 26 February 2012 yielded a total of 1,652 books, including 328 Qur'ans. Pictures of the books were taken on 6 March 2012 for further evidentiary use. Of the 1652 books remaining after their removal from the library, the Qur'ans and Tafseer Sharifs (interpretations of the Qur'an) should be handed over to GIRoA officials immediately. When the remaining books that were recovered from the library are no longer needed for evidentiary value, they should be handed over to GIRoA officials as well.
- c. At approximately noon on 21 February, MPs conducted an inventory of books that were recovered from the incinerator. There were 53 Qur'ans and 162 other religious books that were then transported to the BAF PMO and eventually released to Afghan Uniform Police Chief, [REDACTED] (b)(6), (b)(7)c later that day. According to [REDACTED] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)d, PMO on the scene, all of the books were damaged by fire, but about one-third of the books were only slightly damaged. Additionally, 80 Qur'ans that were in very good shape were selected from the books in the secured container and given to a local Mullah as a show of good will.
- d. In the early afternoon of 22 February an unknown local national reported finding another Qur'an at the burn pit. The Qur'an was secured at the BAF PMO. Afterwards, MPs conducted a thorough inspection of the solid waste management facility life support area (LSA). The inspection resulted in finding 22 additional Qur'ans

USFOR-A

SUBJECT: Executive Summary of Findings and Recommendations, Army Regulation (AR) 15-6 Investigation (Allegation that US Service Members Improperly Disposed of Islamic Religious Materials)

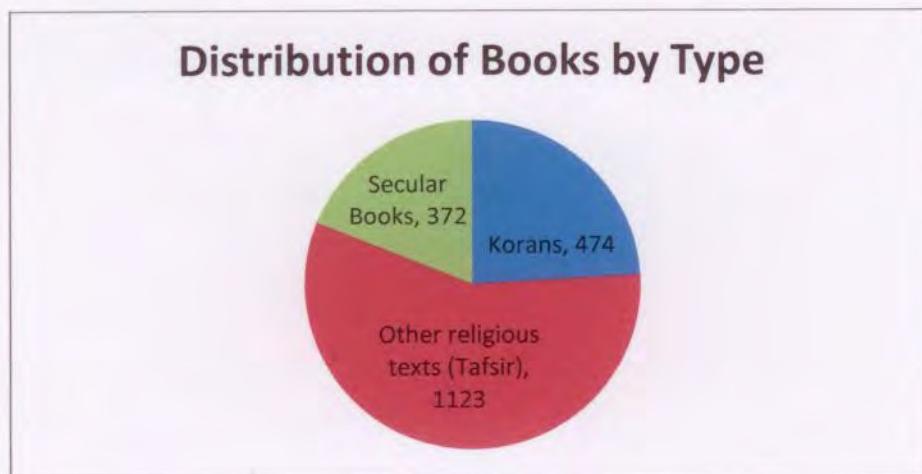
and other religious books that had been hidden in microwaves, under rugs, and in closets throughout the burn pit LSA.

e. On 24 February, the PMO released custody of the additional 22 books discovered during the health and welfare inspection to the Joint Delegation. After inspection, these books were signed over to a representative from the Afghan Ministry of Defense (MoD). He then turned them over to the Commanding General of the DFIP ANA guard force.

f. The table below provides a summary of the total number of books recovered and inventoried throughout the investigation. The total number of books found was 1969 including 474 Qur'ans and 1123 other religious books. US Service Member statements indicate that possibly up to 100 were consumed in the incinerator. Refer to the chart below for the breakdown of the types and numbers of books.

	Korans	Other Religious texts (Tafseer)	Secular Books	Totals
Recovered 20FEB at Burn Pit	53	162	0	215
Given to Mullah 21FEB	80	0	0	80
Recovered 21FEB during Health and Welfare	13	9	0	22
Stored in Container	328	952	372	1652
<b>Totals</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>1123</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>1969</b>

The figure below provides a graphic depiction of the distribution of the books by type based on the Joint Delegation Inventory.



6. Summary of Findings Regarding Policies and Procedures in Place at the DFIP for Handling and Disposing of Written Materials, to Include Religious Materials.

USFOR-A

SUBJECT: Executive Summary of Findings and Recommendations, Army Regulation (AR) 15-6 Investigation (Allegation that US Service Members Improperly Disposed of Islamic Religious Materials)

a. The DFIP Standing Operating Procedures (SOP), dated 1 August 2011, is a fairly extensive document, and it is punitive. Proper Procedures and policies were in place regarding the handling of the Qur'an, but those policies were not followed. Chapter 6 of the DFIP SOP describes how Qur'ans should be handled. It states in paragraph 6-5(2), "Do not disrespect the Koran, it is the Islamic holy book (do not let it touch the floor, kick it, step on it . . ." In paragraph 6-5(3), "non-Muslims should avoid touching a detainee's Koran whenever possible." In paragraph 6-5(4), there is an exception for the guard force to handle the Koran when military necessity requires it. The instructions for handling in that case include "(a) Treat the Koran with respect and reverence. (b) Clean gloves will be put on prior to and worn at all times while handling the Koran. (c) The right hand will be primarily used to manipulate any part of the book . . . . However, both hands will be used when handling the Koran to avoid dropping the book and as a demonstration of respect. (d) The Koran should be treated as a fragile piece of delicate art and therefore, it should be handled carefully so as not to tear pages out of the book or rip the binding."

b. The DFIP SOP is culturally sensitive regarding the handling of written materials, but it does not discuss the disposal of written materials or religious materials. The search and its results differed from normal procedures in many different ways because this type of operation in the library had not been done before. In this case, a linguist characterized hundreds of books as extremist, and the Battalion S2 personnel deemed the books to be contraband. The Battalion S2 contraband SOP appears to have been designed to account for contraband recovered from housing units, not two-thousand library books including Qur'ans and other religious materials. Proper procedures need to be developed and should be included in the DFIP SOP. I recommend that any proposed disposal of written religious materials be elevated for decision to the first flag officer in the chain of command. That flag officer should consult a religious and cultural advisor before making a decision as well.

7. Summary of Findings Concerning the Extent of Cultural Awareness Training the Involved Individuals Received Regarding the Qur'an. Every individual asked indicated that the only cultural awareness training they received specifically regarding the Qur'an was during on-the-job training, other than knowing the Qur'an is the Muslim holy book and is important to Muslim culture. Some indicated an awareness that non-Muslims should not touch the Qur'an and that it should be kept in a clean and high place. Generally speaking, US Service Members seemed to be aware of its importance to Afghan society. Those asked indicated that the cultural awareness training received in the US before deployment mostly consisted of up to an hour of PowerPoint slides. The content consisted of societal norms such as not using the left hand, showing the bottoms of the feet, shaking hands with women and not looking women in the eyes, for instance.

8. Based upon the above findings, I make the following recommendations.

a. TF Protector should conduct an immediate review of its policies to ensure that procedures for handling Qur'ans and other religious materials are apparent and known by all personnel, as well as establishing procedures for the search of library books and the library itself, establishing

USFOR-A

SUBJECT: Executive Summary of Findings and Recommendations, Army Regulation (AR) 15-6 Investigation (Allegation that US Service Members Improperly Disposed of Islamic Religious Materials)

a standard to distinguish Qur'ans and other religious books from other texts, and clarifying and strengthening the procedures that are used to handle, log, and dispose of contraband.

- b. The failure to cross-talk between American and Afghan units contributed to this tragedy. TF Protector must immediately renew and strengthen its efforts to build trust and a genuine partnership between its unit and the Afghan units that work within the DFIP, establishing and deepening this partnership. TF Protector must immediately address the training deficiencies of US Service Members with regard to the DFIP SOP, search procedures and the handling of religious material, with an emphasis on the Qur'an.
- c. Combined Joint Interagency Task Force (CJIATF) 435 and TF Protector should review its command-and-control relationships within the DFIP to ensure that there is proper cross-talk among agencies and that operations are planned and approved with the coordination of all pertinent parties. Also recommend that CJIATF 435 direct a relook at the DFIP SOP in order to clearly articulate responsibilities within the DFIP, to include the library.
- d. Commander, TF VIPER should immediately conduct retraining and recertification of all counter intelligence personnel and establish clear procedures within the team for handling, interpreting, and collecting intelligence where it involves religious material.
- e. COMISAF/COMUSFOR-A should issue a tactical directive that discusses the importance of the Qur'an and other religious books and establishes clear procedures for handling during military operations. As part of that directive, the authority to dispose of actual or suspected religious materials should be withheld to the first general officer or flag officer in the chain of command.
- f. Recognizing that ignorance of the Qur'an and its importance in the Islamic faith contributed to this incident, COMUSFOR-A, in coordination with the Services, should review existing training, including pre-deployment training, and ensure that training incorporates an appreciation of the Qur'an and its place within the Islamic faith.
- g. COMUSFOR-A should establish policies that, where possible, redundant linguists should be used regarding interpretations of any religious material, particularly in the case of intelligence and counterintelligence operations.
- h. COMUSFOR-A should direct that those Qur'ans and other religious materials that were removed from the library be transferred to officials of the Ministry of the Interior.
- i. Finally, I recommend that the following personnel be referred to the (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c

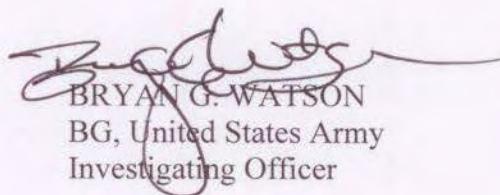
(b)(3), (b)(5), (b)(6), (b)(7)c

USFOR-A

SUBJECT: Executive Summary of Findings and Recommendations, Army Regulation (AR) 15-6 Investigation (Allegation that US Service Members Improperly Disposed of Islamic Religious Materials)

(b)(3), (b)(5), (b)(6), (b)(7)c

9. The point of contact for this report is the undersigned at DSN [REDACTED] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c or SVOIR [REDACTED] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c  
[REDACTED] (b)(3), (b)(6), (b)(7)c



BRYAN G. WATSON  
BG, United States Army  
Investigating Officer